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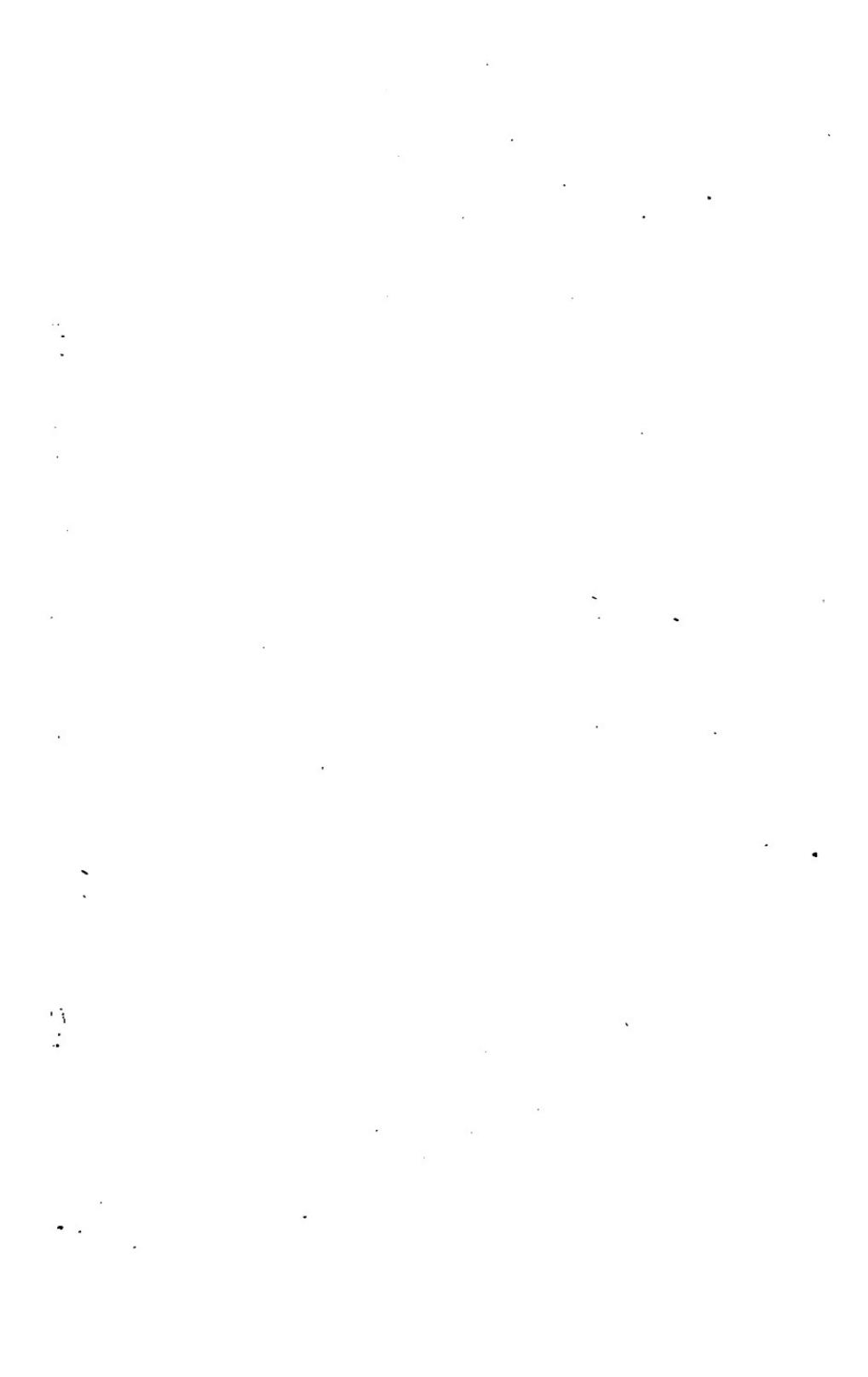
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FAMILY PRAYERS

BY THE LATE

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

ROBERT ISAAC WILBERFORCE, M.A.

VICAR OF EAST FARLEIGH, LATE FELLOW OF ORIEL
COLLEGE.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

As it is hoped that this publication may be useful, it is judged expedient to print it separately, rather than to unite it with some other pieces by Mr. Wilberforce, which, in process of time, will probably be presented to the public.

The Editor takes this opportunity of mentioning that a life of Mr. Wilberforce, compiled from his own letters and journals, will be published at as early a period as the magnitude of the task allows.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

THE following pages supply a form, as the present remarks are designed to enforce the importance, of family devotion. To those who entered my father's domestic circle it is well known what moment he himself attached to the practice in question. His opinion on this subject cannot be better expressed than in the words of a passage which he often quoted with the utmost approbation ; a passage, moreover, which from the high station of its author, from his good sense, his honesty, and his utter freedom from any overstrained warmth of feeling, is entitled in itself to especial attention. One principal part of religion, says Archbishop Tillotson, "consists in the setting up the constant worship of God in our families, by daily prayers to God, every morning and evening, and by reading some portion of the Holy Scriptures at those times, especially out of the Psalms of David, and the New Testament. And this is

so necessary to keep alive, and to maintain, a sense of God and religion in the minds of men, that where it is neglected, I do not see how any family can in reason be esteemed a family of Christians, or indeed to have any religion at all."

Certainly when we take into account how consistent this custom is with the principles of Scripture, how well adapted to the wants of our nature, how strongly urged upon us by good men, it is difficult to understand its omission by those who profess themselves to be Christians. To those, indeed, who avowedly give up the world to come, it is not surprising that this or any other holy custom should be distasteful. But how persons, who in other things lead christian lives, and respect the other ordinances of religion, can bring themselves to neglect this duty, it is hard or, as the Archbishop implies, almost impossible to conceive.

Yet there are two considerations to which the conduct in question, even in well-intentioned men, may occasionally be attributed. The principles on which such persons act it seems particularly desirable to consider, because if the neglect alluded to be occasioned by a mistake in judgment, and not by a want of principle, we may anticipate good effects from temperate yet

earnest expostulation ; or if, as is rather to be feared, the fault be one of the heart not of the head, it will be useful, even for the sake of others, to unmask those excuses by which men disguise their errors.

The first thing, which is said by these persons, is, that the tone and feelings of ordinary life are inconsistent with that state of mind, with which we should approach the throne of the Almighty. Conversation, they allege, especially between those not intimately acquainted, and the solemn offices of prayer and praise, seem to require such a different atmosphere, that to pass from the chillness of one to the warmth of the other is a painful transition. A certain time is needed before the mind can acclimate itself to its new state. The awful labours of devotion must not be entered upon unprepared.

To this, in some cases, it is added, that the habits and hours of modern life are inconsistent with that decent regularity which befits a religious service.

Of this last difficulty it may be said, that even if it should occasionally stand in the way of family worship in the evening, yet that it can never prevent its morning celebration. But on this subject it is the less important to speak,

because as it is obvious that objections may always be made against this or any other good custom, so it is certain, that when the duty is duly felt, it will be easy to obviate such incidental difficulties.

The general objection, which has been stated, is of a more serious kind. Its principle is more deeply rooted in the corrupt nature of our social system. So far indeed as it is felt by devout men, it may be sufficiently obviated by the perusal of some of the sublime yet calming words of Scripture, or by a few moments of such quiet thought as the hallowed wisdom of our ancient ritual* prescribed for the priest, just entering on his lofty ministrations. But its influence is more widely extended. It is the result of a conviction which is secretly acted upon without being openly professed. Men of decent exterior can scarcely bring themselves to avow, that the habitual worldliness of their thoughts and wishes makes it impossible for them to introduce a sabbatical spirit amidst the labours of the week. Yet it is in reality be-

* The collect with which our Communion Service opens was formerly offered up by the Priest, while robing himself for the altar, "Dum sacerdos induit se sacris vestibus dicat," &c.—*Missale ad Usum, Eccl. Sarisbur.*

cause their hearts are overcharged with the cares of this life that they are unable to keep alive the recollection of eternal things. What is this but a confirmation of the ancient saying, that prayer and sin cannot go on together, because either men's prayers will make them leave off sinning, or their sins will force them to desist from praying? Is not this exactly what happens when, because the ordinary state of men's minds is inconsistent with devotion, therefore they forego, not their frivolous and worldly pursuits, but the opportunity of intercourse with heaven? It is no new discovery, certainly, that we cannot serve God and mammon: and can we doubt to which service men devote themselves, when, because they live according to the course of this world, therefore the command to live in the spirit of prayer is neglected? (1 Thess. v. 17.) We are told in Scripture, (1 Tim. ii. 8,) that the habit of devotion is inseparable from a christian life. It is answered, that men's habits, words, and thoughts, make such a state impossible. Do we acknowledge the things incompatible, and can we hesitate which we should abandon? It can be no question, at all events, with those who remember what their baptismal vow bound them to renounce, and to what it pledged them to adhere.

This excuse therefore affords in itself sufficient proof of the low and worldly standard of those who adduce it. It is the very condition of men who know that they are strangers and pilgrims in this world, not so completely to assume its spirit, as for a moment to forget their loftier destination. Their life should be that of the charmed combatant, of whom we read in Oriental fable, who, if he forgot for an instant the object of his pursuit, was to sink into his native weakness. Men act, on the other hand, as though it were their wish, in the trivial distractions of a bustling life, if not in the delusions of sensual pleasure, to forget their high origin and lofty hopes. What wonder, if to such persons family devotion is ungrateful?

The objection before us too is one which makes equally against all christian practice. Private as well as family prayer, public as well as domestic worship, might on this principle be abandoned. If men are prepared to go this length, and, giving up every form of religion,

“Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,” they must do it at their will. But let them not have a name to live while they are dead, or mislead others by the profession of Christianity, while they give manifest proof that they disregard its power.

And it is not necessary, as some may imagine, that men should seclude themselves from the duties of life in order to pay to God that honour which is due. That a man may be engaged in the hottest throng of worldly business, and yet retain a continual sense of higher things, and continual preparation for holy duties, is a fact which, as God's word would prepare us to expect it, so the experience of life happily confirms.

"There are in this loud stunning tide
 Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
 Of th' everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart
 Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
 Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

On this subject no other proof is needed than that which the author of the following Prayers afforded by his own example: the flame of his devotion was but fanned into greater warmth by the storms which threatened to extinguish it. Amidst the temptations of active life, he retained the spirit, because he followed in the steps, of that father of the faithful seed, every stage in whose calm and thoughtful pilgrimage was hallowed by an altar to his God. (Genesis xii. 7, 8.)

But we come now to the other cause which leads some conscientious persons to omit this duty. It is an objection which requires to be treated with the more consideration, because it arises from a good, though a misdirected principle. There is a large class happily in this land, who cling with deep-rooted attachment to that ancient system, by which our country has been brought, under God's blessing, to its present greatness, and by whose healthful and vigorous energy it promises to survive the agitations of an evil age. By such persons the custom before us is sometimes looked upon as of recent origin, and because family prayer was not, they think, a universal practice formerly, they doubt therefore its present necessity.

For the exalted spirits of an earlier age it is impossible to feel too much reverence. If men were called on to attain an eminence which those distinguished servants of God did not reach, they might well despair. But persons who take this view of things ought to be especially on their guard, lest they mistake the accidental circumstances for the guiding principles which they respect. And this is just one of those cases in which a servile obedience to the form may blind men to the spirit of experi-

ence. The pilot, who through stormy seas would hold always the same course, must do so by adjusting sail and helm to the direction of the tempest. If we would imitate the religious spirit of past times, it must be by appealing in every fresh emergency to the principle of ancient institutions.

This remark is illustrated by the history of family worship. The change which has taken place in our national habits during the last few centuries has disposed men to look for instruction much more from written, and much less from oral communication. To this circumstance, as well as to the reaction consequent on that over-estimate of religious forms, for which the middle ages were remarkable, we must in great measure refer it, that the daily custom of public worship has passed almost into disuse. It is obvious also that increased wealth and population have introduced a more bustling spirit than of old, so that the attendance on such a service in this mercantile age would require greater effort than it did formerly. It was at the æra of the Reformation that these causes began to operate. The need of something which might be substituted in the place of what was abandoned was at once perceived.

It was then, accordingly, that those forms of prayer appeared which are appended to our older copies of the Scripture.*

Yet still the excellent custom of daily service remained. In the families of noblemen it was still usual to have resident chaplains. Those who are acquainted with the lives of Herbert, Hammond, Beveridge, and many other good men, need not be told that the celebration of daily service made part of their duties. It was one effect of the unhappy rebellion that this voice of prayer and praise was drowned in the din of its unnatural tumult. When that storm was laid, there had arisen a generation, at once disgusted by the inconsistent conduct of those who professed religion, and unused to the wholesome instruction of our inestimable ritual. Since that time no change of circumstances has favoured the revival of the ancient custom, so

* Certain godly prayers are to be found attached to most Bibles printed in the reign of Elizabeth.

Many forms of prayer for families were printed separately about the same period, *e. g.* "Christian Prayers as well for private as public exercise. 1571." "A Book of Christian Prayers collected out of the Ancient Writers, beginning with one for a Household. 1590." "Private Prayers for Householders to say in their Families. 1590." And many others.

that in the days of our fathers it had been almost abandoned.

It is under these circumstances, then, that the duty of family worship addresses itself to our attention. It is not only recommended by its own usefulness, but it has in its favour the concurrent testimony of every age of Christians. It is no new habit, therefore, however important, which those who omit it are called upon to introduce ; they are urged merely to revive, under another form, an ancient institution. To return, indeed, exactly to what was once practised might prove better still ; but, when that cannot be, no reasonable man can plead attachment to early usage as an excuse for rejecting its closest imitation.*

* Daily public worship “ being impracticable in country parishes, by reason of the difficulty of getting the people together from their several distant habitations, the next thing that is practicable is to be said in its stead, and that is family prayer.”—*From one of Prieux' Addresses to the Clergy of his Archdeaconry.*

To his clerical brethren the Editor would respectfully submit the following advice given by this celebrated man on the same occasion. He said, “ that prayer was so much the duty of the clergy, that every one of the order should not only be diligent and constant in daily offering of it up unto God every morning and evening with his whole family, but that in whatever other

It was exactly on this principle that it was proposed by the convocation of 1689* to put forth an authorised form of family devotion. Had that great crisis of our religious history been

family he should at any time happen to lodge, he ought to offer his prayers to the family, if they should not be otherwise provided for that duty, and exhort them to join with him in them ; and should they refuse to hearken to him therein, let him look on that house as unfit for a clergyman to make his abode in, and avoid it accordingly.”

* “ There was also provided a family book, to be authorized by this convocation : it contained directions for family devotions, with several forms of prayer for worship every morning and evening, suited to the different circumstances of the families in which they were to be used. There was room to hope that this work might have been of great use towards the restoring of family devotion among us, and thereby make religion flourish in the land. For families may be considered as lesser churches, of which the national one is the aggregate ; and the introducing of religion into the parts seems the most effectual way of making it flourish in the whole.”—*Life of Dean Prideaux*, p. 61.

“ Whereas these (the Church) prayers are many of them proper only to be read by men in orders ; many families of the gentry and nobility, where there were no chaplains, began to disuse them ; and nothing being substituted in their room, this was, in a great many families, the occasion of totally neglecting the duty.—*Ib. p. 61.*

marked by a measure, which, making this custom nearly universal among churchmen, would have brought the lofty principles of our faith into immediate contact with the realities of life, it seems scarcely possible that it should have been followed by the age of indifference which succeeded. But the abandonment of this purpose was one evil which resulted from that interference with the liberties of the English church, to which the critical state of his affairs, the "*res ducet et regni novitas,*" incited the yet unestablished monarch.

But it is time to give some account of the following pages. It was my father's common habit during many years to employ no written form of family devotion, but from the treasures of a heart deeply sensible of its wants, and of a memory well fraught with the language of Scripture, to bring forth, like an instructed scribe, things new and old. He was careful indeed to adopt, as far as might be, the expressions of Holy Writ, considering that we pray with peculiar confidence when our words are derived, not from human wisdom, but from the oracles of God. But as his object was, not to diversify his requests, but to ask daily for daily bread, there was great uniformity in his peti-

tions. To give his own account of this practice, — “The continual recurrence of the same or of similar sentiments in my family prayers, varying according to the varying state of spiritual health, and family and personal circumstances, renders it almost an act of memory.” He was accustomed to object to that limitation of daily prayer to some one specific subject, which appears in certain modern forms of devotion, and also to that studious selection of new phrases, which seems to imply that expressions once used are worn out and unserviceable. Yet what does one day require which is not required by the next, and why should not the same wants be expressed habitually in the same words? It is this appetite for novelty which leads men to substitute laboured and artificial forms of speech for that simple and natural language which is fitting in a creature to his God. “God is in heaven, and man upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.”

Well qualified therefore as my father was, both by nature and habit, for unpremeditated speech, it yet may be said that he employed a form, though of somewhat variable nature, in his family devotions. It will appear even from the following examples, that there were certain

leading petitions which almost always recurred in them. It was the less difficult, consequently, to gratify the wishes of some of his friends, by presenting to them in a written form what they were accustomed to hear with lively interest. In the following prayers accordingly will be found a sample of his ordinary manner.

It may be said, indeed, that it is scarcely just to his memory to make public his unstudied expressions. And those only, to whom they will recall the associations of personal manner and domestic interest, can be expected to appreciate fully such unlaboured compositions. As it was the object, however, of his life to consider what benefit might accrue to others from his exertions, not what credit they might bring to himself, so his wishes will be best consulted by those who make the most instructive use of the testimony he has left behind. The purpose of these pages will not be unanswered, if those who of late have paid honour to his name, learn in this instance to honour his example.

They have here presented to them one means whereby there may be formed a character, which, while it ensures the attainment of those higher objects to which the energies of an im-

mortal being are properly directed, is yet as rich a source of honour, affection, and enjoyment, as though its main end had been this world's estimation. That the habit of family devotion is not inconsistent with the most zealous and unremitting discharge of public duty, is evinced by the example which the author of the following prayers afforded.* His singular union, indeed, of private religion and public usefulness may in great measure be attributed to that state of mind of which this custom was at once a cause and a consequence. The Grecian colonists, whose more polished manners, and the simplicity of whose native speech, were endangered through the contaminations of barbarian intercourse, by assembling at stated seasons to confess their degeneracy, and revive the thought

* The value of his example in this particular appears from a circumstance which, now that both parties concerned are removed from this passing scene, there seems no impropriety in mentioning. One of his most distinguished political contemporaries, a person advanced in years, and whose habits therefore might be supposed inflexible, after he had long considered that domestic worship, however laudable in itself, was not to be expected from men engaged in the busy round of public avocations, was yet led, by witnessing its effect in my father's family, to introduce it in his own.

of purer times, retained as well the language which was their common bond, as the superiority which was the birthright of their race. Amidst the increasing turmoil of our days the custom of daily worship may be looked to by Christians for a similar result. It has been shown, indeed, that this practice comes commended by the experience of former times. But if it were needed in a period of quiet and repose, how much more amidst the agitation by which our cities are now convulsed, and which shakes even the villages of our land! In tranquil days the disciples were comforted by the presence of Christ; but it was amidst the waves of Gennesareth that they learnt to appreciate that power, which could hush the stormy elements into rest. It was when neither sun nor stars for many days appeared, and no small tempest lay upon him, that the captive apostle could be of good cheer, because there was with him the angel of that God, whose he was and whom he served.

But besides the example here set forth, and which at the present moment is so especially important, it may be hoped that the warmth and reality of the following pages may kindle a corresponding feeling in those who peruse them.

It is the want of this feeling to which the neglect of family devotion must, after all, be attributed. Yet, without this state of mind, how delusive will hope, how vain will earthly success eventually appear! Let a man have that best of this world's possessions, the love of all his associates, let him be attended by mourning multitudes to his honourable grave; yet do these things but the more demonstrate that the fruits of time are gathered from a stock which yields nought but what is unsatisfying and corruptible. It is after all but a mingled emotion, with which we visit the tombs of those, of whom while we remember that they gained whatever was ennobling in this life, we are thereby but the more reminded that they have lost it all. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out." Were there no further hope, it might indeed be wise to beguile our grief with the melancholy solace of the heathen poet,

At nos horrifico cinefactum te prope busto
Insatiabiliter deslebimus, aeternumque
Nulla dies nobis mæorem e pectore demet.

But how miserable the expedient! How little fitted to satisfy the cravings of the immortal spirit, now doubly conscious of the vanity of

earth, and looking around for somewhat on which to stay the “ thoughts which wander through eternity ! ” And how different our feelings when bereft of those, whose earthly pilgrimage was cheered with the anticipation, and who now possess the full fruition, of heavenly glory ! Their joy is not blighted, but matured. They are transplanted to an immortal soil, and their golden fruits ripen in a purer region.

To those therefore who weep for the author as a parent, the following pages suggest an abiding consolation : the state of mind and feeling which they indicate supplies the only comfort which cannot pass away. Without this he might indeed have been renowned for his talents and his philanthropy, he might have made his grave with the mighty, and the great ones of earth might have gathered round his tomb, he might have lived in the affection of his friends, and bequeathed to his children the heritage of a deathless fame, but he would not have left to them the more precious confidence that he had but entered into his proper dwelling-place, and taken possession of those joys for which his spirit was prepared.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil : For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE GRACE.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

FAMILY PRAYERS.

SUNDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

O LORD GOD, who, though unseen by our bodily eyes, art continually about our bed, and about our path, and seest all our ways, in whom we live and move and have our being, who art the Author of all the various comforts, which we here enjoy, and to whom we look for all future benefits, we desire now to bow down before Thee. Let Thy Holy Spirit, we beseech Thee, help our infirmities, that we may worship Thee in Spirit and in truth. We approach Thee in the name of Jesus Christ, the great Mediator between God and man.

And now when we are again returned to the day that is consecrated to Thy special service, enable us, we beseech Thee, to welcome its arrival, and to employ it in a manner suited to its high and holy character. May we this day endeavour seriously to consider our ways, and examine our true condition, whether we are travelling in the broad road that leadeth to destruction, or in the narrow way that leadeth to life. Oh, let not self-love deceive us in this important inquiry, and grant us Thy heavenly grace to soften our hearts, that we may feel what it is to offend the God who has every claim to our allegiance and love. May we be convinced not merely of the guilt of our disobedience, but also of the baseness of our ingratitude. May we be filled with a lively sense of Thy goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering. May we delight to call to mind all the various mercies which we have been receiving at Thy hands from the first moment of our

existence to the present hour. Above all, may we remember Thine infinite love in sending Thine own Son, the partaker of Thy glory, to die for us men, and for our salvation, in calling us to the knowledge of Thy heavenly truth, and influencing our reluctant hearts, and bearing with our manifold provocations.

Enable us, we beseech Thee, on this day especially, to be more diligent in running the race that is set before us, that we may press forward with increasing earnestness, may grow in grace, and have more and more our conversation and our treasure in Heaven. May we thankfully detach ourselves from all worldly cares, business and occupations, and endeavour to set our affections in a peculiar degree on things above, and to strengthen our hopes of immortality. May we be sensible of the comparative vanity of all human enjoyments, and may we pursue that good which is substantial and everlasting.

And may we this day be filled with the spirit of the God of love. May all angry passions and evil desires be rooted out of us, and may we be more meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and have in some degree those dispositions and that grace, which shall be perfected in glory. May we this day read Thy holy word with seriousness and self-application. May we pray to Thee both in public and private without wandering thoughts. Even in our seasons of recreation may there be some savour of heavenly things. Accompany us to Thy house of prayer this day, and enable us, we beseech Thee, to engage in those sacred offices without weariness or distraction, with a serious desire of pleasing Thee, and of enjoying the light of Thy countenance. May we listen to thy preached word with humility, remembering that whoever plants or waters, it is Thou only that giveth the increase. And let not the evil spirit take away the good

seed out of our hearts, or draw our minds from the serious reflections, which may have entered into them.

We beseech Thee also, O Lord, to hear our prayers in behalf of all whom we should remember at the throne of grace. Take us and them into Thy keeping for the ensuing day. Let us this day be full of thankfulness, full of heavenly affections, full of desires to do good to others, as well as to obtain benefit for ourselves. And may we, if it please Thee, enjoy a measure of that peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and of that joy, with which a stranger cannot intermeddle. We ask all in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our great Mediator and Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

SUNDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O THOU great and glorious Lord, who assurest us that Thou art willing to be found of them that seek Thee, look we beseech Thee upon us, who as a Christian family now fall down before Thee. We come to Thee in the name of Jesus Christ, our great Mediator and Advocate, trusting entirely in the merits of His atoning blood, and the power of His prevailing intercession. Lord, have mercy upon us ! Christ, have mercy upon us !

Pardon, we beseech Thee, O Lord, whatever thou hast seen amiss in us during the day, which we are now con-

cluding. Forgive any coldness in our devotions, any wanderings in our prayers. Forgive us if we have not been duly intent upon profiting by the sacred services in which we have been engaged, or by the opportunities which Thou hast afforded us. And grant that on the eve of Thine own day, before we close our eyes in sleep, we may solemnly ask ourselves whether, if our souls should this night be required of us, we should be ready for the awful summons. Let none of us continue careless and thoughtless about that great change, which may happen to us at any moment, and which we know must happen ere long. Let us not be quietly gliding down the stream of time, until at length we find ourselves, unprepared, in the gulph of eternity. But may we give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. May we watch successfully against the sin which most easily besets us. May we each of us cultivate the graces in which we are most defective. May we endea-

vour to complete the Christian building, and be going on further and further unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. And grant, Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may be guided by Thy heavenly wisdom in all our ways, and be enabled to be a blessing to others, and to be useful in our day and generation. May we be less selfish, more kind, more bountiful, that so we may imitate the example of our blessed Saviour, who left us a pattern that we should tread in His steps.

We pray to Thee also, O Lord, for those whom we are bound to remember at a throne of grace. Bless the country to which we belong. Bless them that rule over us, both in church and state. Bless, in particular, those that are most near and dear to us ; grant to them every blessing which we ask for ourselves.

We pray to Thee for our fellow creatures of mankind at large, especially for those who are in bodily pain or mental affliction. Grant that all which they

here endure may tend to their spiritual and everlasting benefit.

Bless those who labour in Thy word and doctrine. May they be the honoured instruments of turning many from sin to righteousness, that so we may not in this highly-favoured land have a name to live while we are dead, and have the form of godliness without the power. We pray to Thee for all the dark corners of the earth, for all who are suffering under the evils of slavery, or from injustice or cruelty of any kind. May the veil be taken away from the hearts of thine ancient people, and may they at length acknowledge their long neglected Saviour. Oh, do Thou grant that the reign of the Prince of peace may be more established, that the knowledge of the Lord may cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

And we would bless and praise Thy holy name for all the unnumbered mercies which we are continually receiving at Thy hand. Lord, we thank Thee for every

temporal comfort; there is no end of Thy goodness. Oh, that we lived under a deeper sense of it, that we more and more endeavoured to feel the weight of our immeasurable obligations to Thee. And on this day especially let it be a part of our delightful occupation to number up the blessings we receive, which however are more than we can recollect, to compare our highly-favoured circumstances with those of so many others less richly blest; and may our gratitude bear some proportion to Thy goodness. May our hearts be filled with thankfulness, and our mouths with praise.

And now Lord we beseech Thee to take us into thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy, and teach us ever to bear in mind the declarations of Thy holy word, that we are continually in danger from his assaults. Grant that the good seed, which may this day have been lodged in our hearts, may bring forth

fruit abundantly to the glory of Thy holy name. Grant that we may this night lie down in peace with Thee through true repentance and lively faith in the Redeemer. And grant that we may be safe from all accidents and dangers, and that we may rise in the morning in health and peace, desirous of devoting our renewed faculties to Thy glory. We ask all in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our great Mediator and Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

MONDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

WE fall down before Thee, O merciful Father, to offer up our united prayers and praises at the footstool of Thy divine Majesty. We thank Thee that Thou hast preserved us during the night past in peace and safety, and raised us up again to see the light of another morning.

And now that we are again returned to the ordinary duties of life, after a day spent in Thy more immediate worship and service, enable us, we beseech Thee, to go forth with an earnest desire of carrying into execution any holy purposes which we may have formed, and of living more

under the influence of Thy heavenly grace. May it be a blessing to us that we have spent a day in more intimate communion with Thee, and may we now endeavour to have our hearts and affections set on things above, and to discharge the various duties of our stations with fidelity, as to the Lord and not to man. May we go forth as with the vows of the Lord upon us, and as with a fresh impulse of soul, disposing us more to do the will of God from the heart. May we have our loins girded, and our lamps burning. May our life be hid with Christ in God. May our chief thoughts, our main desires, be about heavenly things, and may we be comparatively little interested about the concerns of this world. May we serve Thee with a deep sense of our own weakness, and look up to Thee for continual supplies of grace and strength out of the fulness which is in Christ Jesus ; that so we may be enabled to put off entirely the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful

lusts, and may be renewed in the spirit of our minds.

Oh, may we experience this blessed transformation, and meanwhile may we endeavour to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. May we remember that we shall have to give account to Thee hereafter for the talents committed to our stewardship; that we may render up our account at last with joy, and meet our blessed Saviour with confidence, and not be ashamed at his coming.

And now Lord let us once more lift up our voices in praise and thanksgiving for all the renewed mercies which we experience at Thy hand. We thank Thee that Thou hast placed us in that little corner of all the earth, in which we enjoy the greatest measure of personal comfort, and are at the same time favoured with the greatest advantages for our everlasting happiness. We praise Thee for exempting us from so many evils which others of our fellow-

creatures endure, and for granting us blessings to which they are strangers. We thank Thee that we enjoy the clear and full light of Christian truth, while other countries are in darkness ; that we enjoy liberty of person and security of substance, and pass day after day in abundance and peace. Oh, let us remember the obligations which rest upon us, and be filled with more continual gratitude to Thee, our great and unwearied benefactor. May the experience of Thy goodness as to the things of time make us call upon Thee more earnestly for the blessings of eternity.

And now we beseech Thee take us, and all whom we should remember in our prayers, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing day. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy ; succour us in every season of temptation ; and enable us to live in Thy faith and fear and love, under a constant recollection of Thy presence,

MONDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O LORD GOD, infinitely great, glorious and holy, we adore Thy goodness for the blessings of the day which we are now concluding, for all our temporal comforts, and still more for all thy spiritual favours. May we lie down this night with a deep feeling of our obligations to the long-suffering and loving-kindness of our God and Saviour.

Pardon the sins, negligences and ignorances of the day that is past ; at the close of our best days there is much for which we have reason to be humbled in Thy presence. O Lord, enter not into judgment

with us, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. Take away from us, we beseech Thee, every remainder of the heart of stone, and give us hearts of flesh. Enable us to feel our ruined condition without a Saviour, and to fly for refuge to the hope set before us, and may we press forward to the prize of our high calling, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

Grant Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may live under a constant recollection of our true condition in this life, that we may remember we are here for a short and uncertain season, and that death and eternity are at hand. May we live therefore with our loins girded and our lamps burning, as those who wait for the coming of their Lord. May we be diligent in our Master's business, employing the various faculties which Thou hast given us to Thy honour, and striving more and more to let our light so shine before men, that they may glorify our Father which is in Heaven. Grant

Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may also be more useful in our day and generation. May we be endeavouring to lessen the vice and misery which are in the world. And may we strive to serve Thee, not merely from considerations of interest, or from motives of slavish fear, but from a grateful sense of the obligations which we owe Thee, and from a desire to do thy heavenly will out of a deep sense of the mercies which Thou art continually pouring out upon us. And grant Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may live more in peace and love one with another, remembering that love is the fulfilling of the law, and that we are to be the servants and children of the God of love, that we may be followers of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us.

We pray to Thee also for our fellow-creatures, more especially for our friends and benefactors, and grant to all whom we should remember in our prayers the

same blessings which we ask for ourselves. Bless in particular all who are endeavouring to make known the glad tidings of a Redeemer to those who now sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Pity those who are groaning under the yoke of oppression, those who are enduring the ravages of war. Oh, may there be an end to all their evils, may peace and love prevail throughout the earth.

And now Lord, take us, we beseech Thee, into thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; and grant us this night, if it please Thee, such refreshing sleep as may fit us for the duties and services of another day. We ask these and all other blessings in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our great Mediator and Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

TUESDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

WE fall down before Thee, O merciful Father, to offer up the morning tribute of our prayers and praises. Accept we beseech Thee our renewed thanksgivings for the renewed mercies of another day. If thou wert to deal with us according to our deserts, we could claim no favour at Thy hands. Yet while many have passed the night in pain, sorrow, or alarm, Thou hast preserved us in safety : our dwelling has not been the prey of devouring flames ; the sons of violence have not come near us ; we have laid down our heads in quietness, and risen in peace. Lord, we are

loaded with Thy favours ; Thou art continually pouring forth Thy mercies upon us. Thy goodness has distinguished us beyond the greater number of the children of men. We have Thy holy word clearly set before us, we hear Thy ministers proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, and enjoy those advantages and privileges, which many have before desired, but which have not been allowed them.

O Lord, make in us, we beseech Thee, new hearts and renew right spirits within us. Enable us to feel in some degree the infinite mercies of the Redeemer. Enable us to feel our obligations to Him, who though he was rich yet for our sakes became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich ; who exposed Himself to every danger and shame and suffering, leaving the glory and happiness of heaven, for those of whom He knew that they would return evil for good. Enable us to come to Him, who calls us by His heavenly grace to provide for our own happiness,

who bears with all our provocations, and still mercifully beseeches us to be reconciled to Him, and to receive the blessings which he is pressing upon our acceptance. O merciful God, let not any of us be found at last guilty of neglecting this great salvation. We acknowledge with shame and sorrow of heart that we deserve not thy mercies ; the remembrance of our transgressions is grievous to us, the burden of them is intolerable ; but, blessed be Thy name, Thou hast declared that Thou takest pleasure in them that put their trust in Thy mercy, that Thou wilt be found of them that seek Thee, that them that come to Thee Thou wilt in no wise cast out. O then, may we all come with penitent and contrite hearts, and receive large supplies of Thy Holy Spirit to make us new creatures. Give us those spiritual dispositions and tempers which may make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. O Lord, do Thou thus enable every one of us to be in earnest in

this great concern. Sanctify our understandings that we may rightly apprehend and know all the blessed truths revealed to us in Christ Jesus. Sanctify our wills that we may cheerfully embrace the offers which Thou makest, and entirely consent to be Thine. Sanctify our affections that we may love Thee with all our hearts, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength. May we delight in the Lord with all our hearts, and may a flame of holy gratitude warm our souls, and dispose us to be willing to give up ourselves to Him who has done so much for us.

Thus Lord do Thou graciously draw us, we beseech Thee, that we may run after Thee, and grant us here the visitations of Thy grace, that we may at length enjoy the felicity of Thy glory.

And now we beseech Thee to keep us this day in all our ways. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy ; let him not, we beseech Thee, take away from our

souls any serious impressions which may have been made upon them, but do Thou grant that we may be able to resist him, that he may flee from us. And may we strive not to grieve the Spirit of God, but more and more attend to His still small voice, and watch our hearts with all diligence. Thus may we this day live in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, desiring whatever we do, to do all to the glory of Thy name.

We ask for every blessing in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

TUESDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O THOU great and glorious God, who art with us in our most private retirements, and knowest all the secrets of our hearts, to Thee would we lift up our souls. Enable us to have a realizing sense of Thy presence, and to look to Thee as a reconciled God in Christ Jesus, conscious of our own utter unworthiness to appear before Thee, but casting ourselves upon Thy precious promises through Christ Jesus. May we obtain mercy for his sake, and the supply of Thy Holy Spirit.

Pardon, we beseech Thee, all that Thou hast seen amiss in us during the day that

we are now concluding. Lord we confess that this day, as well as other days, we have left undone the things which we ought to have done, and we have done the things which we ought not to have done. How little have we used our time, our talents, our influence, our example, and all our various faculties, with the degree of strenuous exertion which is justly to be required from us in Thy service. To Thee O Lord we owe all we have, and all we are, thou hast bound us to Thyself by ten thousand obligations, and above all, when we had ruined ourselves, Thou hast graciously provided for us, at no less a price than the blood of Thine own Son, the means of escaping from the wrath to come, and of laying hold on eternal life. Grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy heavenly grace to take away the stony heart, and give us hearts of flesh. May we each of us look back upon his own heart and life, that we may truly repent of the various instances in which we have transgressed

Thy holy laws, or made a lukewarm return for all Thy goodness. Lord soften our hardness, warm our coldness, guide our ignorance, support our weakness, and fix our inconstancy. Enable us, we beseech Thee, to live above this world, having our hearts and our affections set on higher and better objects than it contains. May we remember the great account which we must one day give at the judgment seat of Christ of the talents committed to our stewardship. May we employ them so as to render our account with joy. And dispose us more and more to be running the race that is set before us with increasing diligence, following the example of Thy holy apostle, and making it our one great business, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, to press towards the mark for the prize of our high calling.

And now Lord we desire to pray to Thee for all who are near and dear to us by the ties either of nature or of friend-

ship. Grant them the same blessings which we ask for ourselves. Bless them Lord wherever they may be dispersed, and grant that we may be all tending to the same blessed point, and may all meet at last in the presence of our common Lord. And grant Lord Thy blessing, we beseech Thee, to such of them especially as are suffering either in mind, body, or estate; comfort them under their afflictions, in due time give them relief, and may Thy strength be made perfect in their weakness.

And let us bless and praise Thy holy name O Lord for all Thine unnumbered mercies. Lord, we thank Thee that we have gone out and come in again in safety: it is Thy good providence which protects us from all evil; it is thy grace and goodness to which we are indebted for Thy forbearance and long-suffering with us. Oh, that we might love Thee more, that we might be more grateful to Thee than we ever yet have been.

Let us beseech Thee, O Lord, to take us, and all whom we should remember in our prayers, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy ; succour us in every season of temptation ; and if it please Thee give us this night such refreshing sleep that we may rise in the morning desirous of devoting to Thy glory the powers and faculties which Thou hast given us. We ask all in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

O LORD GOD, in whom we live and move and have our being, to whose undeserved kindness we owe all we have, and all we are, once more we desire to offer Thee the tribute of our prayers. May we remember that we are now calling upon ourselves the special attention of that God, who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men.

Lord, we confess with sorrow of heart that we deserve not the least of all Thy mercies. We are too apt to forget Thee and all Thy goodness, and though our necessities compel us to pray to Thee, yet Lord we are too ready to forsake Thee.

Do Thou grant that Thy Spirit may take away the old man with his affections and lusts, and renew us in the spirit of our minds, and enable us to put on the new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness. Grant that we may be enabled more and more to display those fruits and effects of Thy Holy Spirit which we find in the character of Thy first disciples. Give us the administration of the Spirit according to our respective necessities. May we abound in every Christian grace, and thus know that we are branches in the living Vine. May we glorify our heavenly Father, and receive from Thee whatever is needful for our bodies and our souls.

Lord, we know that without thee we can do nothing. Oh, be Thou made of God unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption ; may we receive of thy fulness even grace for grace, and, being made largely partakers of the unsearchable riches of Christ, may we

thus have our treasure in heaven, and walk by faith and not by sight. May we live above the world, its low concerns and unsatisfying vanities, and may we be still endeavouring to please Thee, to root out every remainder of our natural corruption, and to increase in every Christian grace. May we indeed bear about us the likeness of our heavenly Father, and be doing good in our generation according to the will of God, until at length Thou shalt receive us to Thyself, and make us partakers of those pleasures which are at Thy right hand for evermore.

Give us also grateful hearts for all Thy goodness. We desire to bless and praise Thee for all our temporal comforts, for renewing them this day, and for preserving us during the night in peace and safety. But above all we desire to thank Thee for that greatest wonder of Thy love, the sending Thine own Son to die upon the cross for us men, and for our salvation : and to Thee, O most merciful Redeemer,

would we offer up our unfeigned thanks, for that Thou didst willingly empty Thyself of Thy glory, and take upon Thee our nature, and undergo the unknown agonies of thy passion, that so, after Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou mightest open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us, bless His holy name! O that we might join from the heart in the song of the exalted spirits, ascribing blessing, and honour, and glory, and thanksgiving, and praise, to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.

And now Lord grant that this day we may be enabled in all things to walk worthy of Him who hath called us to His kingdom and glory. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; may we have wisdom to guide us in all our ways, that we may be strengthened for every good word and work.

Hear us, and have mercy upon us, and bless also all those whom we should remember in our prayers, that they and we may be under Thy guidance, and that Thou mayest graciously support and strengthen us.

These and all other blessings we humbly ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O LORD GOD, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, we fall down before Thee as a Christian family this night, to offer up the evening sacrifice of our prayers and praises at the throne of Thy Divine Majesty. Mercifully look upon us, O heavenly Father! We come to Thee in the name of Christ Jesus, our great Mediator and Advocate.

Lord, we acknowledge that in ourselves we are unworthy to appear in Thy presence; for Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and we are sinful and un-

clean. But, blessed be Thy name, Thou hast provided a way whereby we may have access to Thee; and pleading the merits of Christ's atoning blood, and relying on his prevailing intercession, we may come with boldness to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in this our time of need.

Pardon we beseech thee all the sins negligences and ignorances of the day which is past. May we all, each for himself, endeavour to call to remembrance our several transgressions; any evil tempers, into which we have this day been betrayed, any unkind words which we have uttered, any wrong actions of which we have been guilty, any good which it was in our power to do, but which we neglected; and may we implore forgiveness for the Redeemer's sake, and obtain Thy Holy Spirit to sanctify our souls. And grant we beseech Thee that we may be daily growing in grace, and as every succeeding day brings us so much nearer to our long

home, may we be the better prepared for the great change which awaits us. Let us have a more deep impression of the reality of invisible things. Let us learn more practically to bear in mind that the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Deliver us from all spiritual sloth and negligence; take away all hardness and insensibility of heart; may we have Thy light to guide, and Thy wisdom to direct us; and enable us to look continually to Thee for grace and strength to discharge the various duties which Thou hast appointed for us.

And now, Lord, let us bless and praise Thee for all Thy mercies. We thank Thee for all our temporal comforts. How many wear out their days in sickness or pain, in want or sorrow, while we have been preserved in health and safety. But, above all we thank Thee for Thy spiritual blessings; for granting us in such abundance the means of grace, and with such

clearness the hope of glory. May we be more grateful to Thee than we ever yet have been, and more desirous to make the only return of which we are capable, by living as those who are not their own but Thine.

We beseech Thee also to hear our prayers for all whom we are bound to remember at the throne of grace. Grant them the same blessings which we ask for ourselves. Bless all especially who are in distress, affliction, or suffering of any kind; support them under all their trials, and grant that what they here undergo may tend to their spiritual improvement and everlasting gain.

And now we beseech Thee take us, and all who are dear to us by the ties of nature or of friendship, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night. As we know not what a night may bring forth do Thou prepare us for whatever may befall us. Guard us against our great spiritual adversary; succour us in every season of temptation; and, if it please

Thee, give us this night such comfortable sleep that we may rise in the morning refreshed, and desirous of devoting the day to thy service and glory.

These and all other blessings we humbly ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

THURSDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

ENABLE us, O Lord, to lift up our hearts unto Thee, and let Thy Holy Spirit help our infirmities, that we may not merely use the posture and language of prayer, but that we may worship Thee in spirit and in truth. We come before Thee the continual dependents on Thy goodness. In Thee we live, and move, and have our being. It is Thou that didst first bring us into existence, Thou didst support us during the helplessness of infancy, and the childishness of our early years, Thou didst bear with us during the levity of youth, Thou hast carried us through the

various periods of our lives, and hast at length brought us through numerous vicissitudes and dangers to see the light of this morning. Let us look up to Thee as the Author and Giver of all our blessings, and may we acknowledge Thy goodness and long-suffering, which have borne with our provocations, and have continually returned us good for evil.

O Lord, let us praise Thee for Thy goodness to us in casting our lot in a land, in which we are exempted from so many of the evils and sufferings incident to human life in other countries and in other times. Thou hast cast our lot in that little spot of all the earth where the greatest degree of spiritual light is combined with every temporal comfort. And we might have been living in this land at a period when we should have been in pagan darkness, subject to all the evils of barbarism and cruelty, the victims of war or captivity, of uncertainty and terror; whereas we have been passing week after

week, year after year, in security and comfort, in abundance and peace. Lord, we have not been duly thankful to Thee for all Thy mercies; but may we be more so than we ever yet have been. May we delight to speak good of Thy name. May we examine our hearts and lives, and compare the poor returns which we make with the various mercies which Thou dost so profusely pour out upon us. May we thus be humbled under a sense of our own base ingratitude, and may we more earnestly desire to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, that we may love Thee more, and be warmed with more fervent and continual gratitude to Thee.

And now Lord we beseech Thee, accept our thanks for the mercies of the past night, for having preserved us in peace and safety, and raised us up again to see the light of another morning. Grant that we may endeavour to make the only return we are able for all Thy goodness, by giving up ourselves to Thy service. May we

cheerfully make the petty sacrifices of inclination or of interest which Thou requirest of us. May we be ashamed of being unwilling to make them when we think of all which Thou hast done for us. But above all impress our hearts, we beseech Thee, with a sense of Thine infinite love in sending Thine own Son, the partaker of Thy nature and of Thy glory, into this world to be made man for our sakes, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And may we adore Thee, O merciful Redeemer, who didst willingly lay down the glory of heaven and its happiness, didst become a wailing infant, subject to all the weaknesses and evils of our nature, and after a life of poverty and hardship didst at length die the most cruel and shameful death human nature could endure; and all to rescue us from everlasting misery, and make us partakers of Thy heavenly glory. Oh, may we consider these things till they have in some degree their due effect upon

us. May the love of Christ henceforth constrain us to live no longer to ourselves, but to Him who died for us. May we more and more consider ourselves not as our own, but as bought with a price, and may we use the blessings which Thou hast given us in Thy fear and love, with gratitude to Thee the Giver of them all. Thus, whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, may we do all to the glory of God.

And now we beseech Thee take us, and all whom we should remember in our prayers, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing day. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; enable us this day to live as Christians ought to do, striving to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in all things to walk worthy of Him who hath called us to his kingdom and glory.

We ask all in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

THURSDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O THOU great and glorious Being, who, though Thou art the high and lofty One that inhabitest eternity, yet condescendest to draw nigh to them who are of a humble and contrite heart, create in us that true humility and contrition which Thou approvest. Mercifully look upon us, O Lord, and accept the supplications and thanksgivings which we would offer up to Thee as a Christian family with united voice, beseeching Thee graciously to receive us for the sake of our great Advocate and Mediator Christ Jesus.

Lord, we confess that we are unworthy

of the least of all Thy mercies, but we beseech Thee wash away all our transgressions in the blood of Christ, and deliver us not only from the condemning guilt of our sins, but from their enslaving power. O Lord, how gracious art Thou, how merciful, how long-suffering, thus to bear with our many provocations, and to shower down thy benefits upon us; and not content with granting us all outward things, Thou art willing to grant us a share in Thine own divine nature, and to renew us after the image of Him that created us.

We beseech Thee especially to pardon all the sins negligences and ignorances of the day which is now past. Enable every one of us to look into his thoughts, words, and actions, into the tempers and dispositions of his mind, that he may lament before Thee whatever has been contrary to Thy heavenly will. O forgive us, forgive us all our manifold transgressions, bear with our many provocations, and enable

us in future to strive to do Thy heavenly will more uniformly, more diligently, more from the heart. May we serve Thee not merely from considerations of interest, or motives of slavish fear, but from a grateful sense of the obligations which we owe Thee, and from a desire to show our gratitude not with our lips only, but in our lives. Grant Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may each of us endeavour more, according to our several characters and circumstances, to use the talents Thou hast committed to our stewardship wisely and faithfully. May we remember that we shall have to answer to Thee hereafter for the use which we have made of all the faculties we possess. May we strive so to employ them that we may at length render up our account with joy. But, Lord, we know our own exceeding weakness and manifold corruption, we know that of ourselves we can do nothing, do Thou therefore give us out of the fulness that is in Christ Jesus all needful bless-

ings, and may He be made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

And now Lord let us bless and praise Thy holy name for all the mercies and blessings of the day which we are concluding; we thank Thee for the many comforts which we enjoy, we thank Thee for exempting us from so many evils which multitudes suffer, we thank Thee, above all, for the spiritual privileges with which Thou hast favoured us. May we maintain a more abiding recollection of thy never-failing goodness, and may our gratitude constrain us to all needful self-denial, and all holy obedience.

Bless also all our fellow-creatures, especially those whom we are bound to remember in our prayers, grant them the same blessings which we ask for ourselves. Bless our country, and them that rule over us, grant wisdom we beseech Thee to their counsels, and grant that as a nation we may be less unworthy of the eminent

privileges with which Thou hast distinguished us. Oh, bless all who are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, and grant that they may be led to the knowledge of salvation through a Redeemer.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to take us and all who are dear to us into thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night. Guard us from our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; and if it please Thee, give us such refreshing sleep as may fit us for the duties and services of another day. We ask all in the name and for the sake of our great Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

FRIDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

O LORD GOD, who hast assured us in Thy holy word that wherever two or three are gathered together in Thy name Thou wilt be in the midst of them, fulfil now Thy gracious promises unto us. We come before Thee as the creatures of Thy hand and the dependents on Thy bounty. We thank Thee for all the mercies of the past night, that we have been preserved in peace and safety, and raised up again to see the light of another day.

And now Lord, we beseech Thee, mercifully look down upon us, lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us, and

have mercy upon us. We beseech Thee give us Thy converting grace. May we fly for refuge to the hope set before us, and while our day of grace and salvation yet remains, may we come to Thee to obtain that pardon and that sanctifying Spirit which Thou art ever willing to bestow. Oh let us beware lest our hearts should be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, and lest we should at last be found guilty of treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath and manifestation of the righteous judgment of God. Let us not despise the riches of Thy long-suffering, but let them turn us to repentance, and cause us to come to Thee with penitent and contrite hearts. May we consider our ways, may we reflect upon our sins, may we consider them in all their aggravations, and enable us more and more to feel the remembrance of them to be grievous and the burden of them to be intolerable. Let us not excuse to ourselves our various faults on the ground of their being little sins, but

let us call to mind the deep guilt and base ingratitude of all disobedience to the laws of our unwearied Benefactor. O Lord, Thou hast every claim to us by creation and redemption. To Thee we ought thankfully and with delight to consecrate our powers. Oh, strengthen us henceforth by Thy heavenly grace that we may be enabled to live to Thy glory. Let not any one who is here present remain in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, but may we be delivered, and brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. And if in any degree we have experienced this deliverance, grant that it may be completed and perfected ; that we may grow in grace, may thirst after righteousness, may strive to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, and to be more and more adding to our faith virtue, and to our virtue knowledge, and all other christian graces. Thus may we give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and become more meet to be par-

takers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

And now let us offer our humble thanks for all Thy goodness, and praise Thee from the heart for every blessing which Thou grantest us, and for exempting us from so many evils. Lord, we beseech Thee, take us and all whom we should remember in our prayers, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing day; guard us against our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; and enable us this day to live in Thy faith, and fear, and love, under a continual recollection that Thou art present with us, and that Thou seest the secrets of our hearts. O Lord of ourselves we can do nothing, but Thou hast promised that they who wait upon Thee shall renew their strength, and they who put their trust in Thee shall not be ashamed. May we therefore be Thine in life, and Thine in death, and be Thou, O Lord, the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever.

Hear us, and have mercy upon us, and exceed all that we have asked, through the merits and for the sake of Jesus Christ our great Mediator and Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

FRIDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O LORD GOD Almighty, who art the same yesterday to-day and for ever, infinite in all perfections but ever ready to hear the prayers of Thy creatures, we approach Thee according to Thine own appointment. Hear us, we beseech Thee, from heaven Thy dwelling-place, and let Thy Holy Spirit help our infirmities, that we may be enabled to worship Thee in spirit and in truth.

Take away from every one of us who is here present every remainder of the heart of stone, and give us hearts of flesh. Enable us, we beseech Thee, to feel deeply

our need of a Saviour, and to have a more entire conviction of our own unworthiness. Convince us of our natural condition, that we are indeed bowed down by our sins, and enslaved by our corruptions. May we be urged by the deep feeling of them to fly for refuge to the hope set before us, and to seek to have all our transgressions blotted out in the atoning blood of the Redeemer.

O Lord grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy pardoning mercy, and Thy sanctifying grace. Grant that we may feel Thy new covenant performed to us, may have Thy laws written in our hearts, and be enabled to love Thee more and to serve Thee better. May we be united to the Saviour by living faith, and bring forth daily the fruits of righteousness to the glory of Thy name. May we strive more and more to grow in grace, laying aside every weight, and the sin that does most easily beset us, and running with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto

Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith. And grant Lord that we may all live under a becoming conviction of the shortness and uncertainty of life, and be aware that death and eternity are at hand. May we continually bear in mind that we know not how soon we shall be called hence. May we live therefore as those who wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with our loins girded and our lamps burning.

And we beseech Thee to hear our prayers for all whom we should remember at the throne of grace. Grant them the same blessings which we ask for ourselves. Bless such of them especially as are suffering under any of the evils incident to human life, whether affecting the body or the mind. Hear the cry of the oppressed. Oh, grant them peace; and give success to all who are striving to mitigate the afflictions of others. Bless those nations which sit in darkness and the shadow of death; upon them may the

Sun of Righteousness arise with healing
in his wings. Bless Thine ancient people ;
may the light of Thy heavenly truth shine
upon them.

And let us bless and praise Thy holy
name, O Lord, for all Thine unnumbered
mercies. Let us thank Thee for the bless-
ings of the day past ; that we have gone
out and come in again in safety, and that
no evil has befallen us. Let us praise
Thee for all our temporal comforts, but
still more for all our spiritual blessings.
Let us be continually thinking of the mer-
cies of our Redeemer with overflowing
thankfulness of heart ; and may we have
a generous affection towards all our fellow-
creatures, that we may imitate the ex-
ample of Thy holy apostle, and be willing
to deny ourselves for the sake of others.
Thus may we live, not according to the
scanty measure of worldly obedience, but
may we render Thee the large and liberal
returns of a willing service.

And now we beseech Thee take us, and

all who are dear to us, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night. Guard us against our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; and if it please Thee, give us this night such refreshing sleep as may fit us for the duties and services of another day. Hear us, we beseech Thee, and have mercy upon us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our great Mediator and Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

SATURDAY MORNING.

Let us pray.

O THOU great and glorious God, our Creator Preserver and continual Benefactor, to Thee would we lift up our souls. We thank Thee for the mercies of the past night, and that Thou hast preserved us in peace and safety to see the light of another day. And now we beseech Thee mercifully look upon us, and lift up the light of Thy countenance, and have mercy upon us.

Lord, we confess with sorrow of heart that we are not worthy in ourselves of the very least of all Thy mercies. But, blessed be Thy name, Thou hast gra-

ciously assured us that Thou art willing to pardon our sins if we come to Thee as penitent believers in Jesus Christ. To Thee therefore we humbly come, we cast ourselves upon the riches of Thy grace, we humbly pray that the atoning blood of Christ may wash away all our corruptions, and that Thy Holy Spirit may be given us to deliver us from the power of sin and Satan, and to bring us into the full enjoyment of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

O merciful Father grant us, we beseech Thee, Thy Holy Spirit in larger measure; enable us to have the eyes of our understanding enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of Thy calling, and what the riches of the glory of Thine inheritance in the saints. May we learn to have a suitable value for those blessed things which Thou offerest to our acceptance. May we never trifle in the great work of our salvation. May we strive more and more to enter in at the strait gate, or if

we have reason to hope that we are now walking in the narrow way of life, Oh, may we press forward in it with increasing earnestness. May we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. And grant Lord, we beseech Thee, that we may learn to have our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows, all grounded on Thy holy word, that we may learn to love what Thou lovest, and to hate that which Thou hatest. May we put aside all selfishness, be kind generous and forgiving. May we learn that self-denial which our Saviour enforces upon us, declaring that if any man will come after Him, he must take up his cross daily. Lord, may we be striving to tread in Thy steps. We know our own great weakness and utter insufficiency, but, blessed be Thy name, Thou hast declared that Thou wilt give Thy Holy Spirit to them that ask it. We call upon Thee therefore with earnestness and confidence, with an assured hope of Thy merciful loving-kindness, and continual truth.

And let us bless and praise Thee for Thine unnumbered mercies, and for exempting us from so many evils to which our fellow-creatures are subject. Oh, let not the frequent and regular recurrence of Thy mercies lead us to forget that it is to Thy goodness we owe them all. Let us live under a continual sense of the mercies which we are receiving from Thee, and above all may we be thankful for that transcendent instance of them, the sending Thine own Son to die for us men, and for our salvation.

And now we beseech Thee take us, and all whom we should remember in our prayers, into thy gracious keeping for the ensuing day. Guard us and them against our great spiritual enemy ; succour us in every season of temptation ; enable us this day to live in Thy faith and fear and love, under a continual recollection of Thy presence, and with a constant desire of Thy glory.

These and all other blessings we

humblly ask in the name and for the sake
of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and
Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

SATURDAY EVENING.

Let us pray.

O THOU great and glorious God, infinitely glorious and holy, we fall down before Thee, as a Christian family, this night to offer up our united prayers and praises at the throne of Thy divine majesty. Lord, we come to Thee in the Saviour's name, conscious that it is only through the merits of His atoning blood, and the power of His prevailing intercession, that we can have access to Thee. But, O merciful Father, as Thou desirest not the death of a sinner, but hast graciously declared that Thou art ready to receive all who come to Thee in the

Saviour's name, we would come with humble boldness to the throne of grace to find mercy and obtain grace to help in this our time of need.

Lord we beseech Thee grant us Thy holy Spirit. Enable us to put off the old man, to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and to put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Lord enable us, we beseech Thee, to live above this world, as those who know that life is but a journey towards their everlasting home, and that when we go hence our condition must be unalterably fixed in happiness or in misery. Let us not trifle with the great concern of our everlasting salvation, and let us remember the many advantages and privileges which Thou hast afforded us, and Thine own declaration that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for those who enjoyed the privileges of Thy day upon earth, but enjoyed them in vain.

Let not us at last be found guilty of neglecting Thy great salvation. May we come in earnest to that Saviour who has declared, that them that come to Him He will in no wise cast out. May we lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

And now Lord when we are once more come to the close of another week, grant that we may look back upon the week that is past with gratitude for all the various mercies which we have experienced during the course of it. Let us look back also with humility, under a sense of all the sins, negligences, and ignorances, with which we are justly chargeable. And may the solemn recollection, that every succeeding week brings us so much nearer to our long home, have a due effect upon us. As our allotted span of life grows shorter hour by hour, may we daily be making some progress in the way that

leads to heaven. May each of us seriously examine himself both in heart and life, and may we ask ourselves the decisive question, whether we have entered into that blessed path, which will at length conduct us to glory. And enlarge our souls, we beseech Thee, to the full measure of that glorious portion, which Thou offerest to our acceptance. Raise our low desires; warm our cold affections; overcome the reluctance of our unwilling hearts; and make us earnest in working out our own salvation, while we look to Thee to work in us to will and to do of Thy good pleasure.

We pray also for those whom we are bound to remember in our prayers. Grant them the same blessings which we ask for ourselves. Take us, and all who are dear to us, into Thy gracious keeping for the ensuing night; guard us against our great spiritual enemy; succour us in every season of temptation; and grant us this night, if it please Thee, such refreshing

sleep as may fit us for the duties and services of another day, that we may rise in the morning desiring to devote Thine own day to Thy more immediate worship and service.

We ask these and all other blessings in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate.

Our Father, &c.

The grace, &c.

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